DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 241 TM 022 620

AUTHOR Barnette, J. Jackson
TITLE AERA Annual Meeting Participant Activities and Satisfaction: Results of the 1993 Market Survey.
PUB DATE [Oct 93]
NOTE 31p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Activities; *Conferences; *Educational Research; Experience; Meetings; *Researchers; *Satisfaction; Surveys; Workshops
IDENTIFIERS *American Educational Research Association; Market Research

ABSTRACT

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting attracts several thousand participants. With several hundred sessions combined with opportunities for other professional, social, and personal activities, the meeting provides a widely varied set of experiences. The market survey conducted at the 1993 Annual Meeting sought to describe the relative time spent in different activities as well as general satisfaction with meeting activities. Responses were received from 268 participants, representing over 3,400 participant hours. Annual meeting participants spend about 37% of their time in sessions, about 15% having meals, about 8% in meetings, and about 35% in other activities. Participants had positive levels of satisfaction with most Annual Meeting activities including experimental and policy-related sessions. Ten tables present survey findings. (Contains 7 references.) (Author/SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

TM

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. JACKSON BARNETTE

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ED 378 241

AERA Annual Meeting Participant Activities and Satisfaction: Results of the 1993 Market Survey

J. Jackson Barnette

University of Alabama

Mailing address: P.O. Box 870231
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0231

e-mail: JBARNETT @ UA1VM

Acknowledgement: The author acknowledges the assistance of Matthew Miles in the design of the Market Survey and the assistance of Eva Sasser, Bea Volkman, and Carol Johnson in the collection and summarization of data.

J. Jackson Barnette is professor of educational research, Area of Professional Studies, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0231. He specializes in statistical methods, evaluation, and survey research.

TM022620

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ABSTRACT

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting attracts several thousand participants. With several hundred sessions combined with opportunities for other professional, social, and personal activities, the AM provides an infinite set of experiences. The market survey, conducted at the 1993 Annual Meeting, sought to describe the relative time spent in different activities as well as general satisfaction with AM activities. AM participants spend about 37% of their time in sessions, about 15% of their time having meals, about eight percent in meetings, and about 35% in other activities. Participants had positive levels of satisfaction with most AM activities including experimental and policy-related sessions.

1993 saw the first concentrated effort to evaluate the AERA Annual Meeting (AM). Seven strands (Miles, 1993) were inititated to look at the AM from different perspectives, using different methods, and different investigators. This effort was clearly one of the most elaborate, thorough attempts to evaluate a large professional meeting.

A review of the literature indicates very little discussion of conference evaluation. Ayers (1989) presented four areas served by evaluation of workshops or institutes: planning, programming, conducting, and changing. He provided suggestions for conducting formative, summative, and follow-up evaluations of workshops. Halverson & Thiesse (1979) presented an evaluation approach for use with a regional conference on adult, continuing, and community education. Their evaluation centered around a rationale of the relationships between purpose, program, and procedures of the conference. Data collection included: informal observation; completion of reaction sheets by presenters, exhibitors, and participants; completion of participant session reaction cards; and completion of task analysis forms. They present a summary of their findings, including comments made by participants, and conclude that the evaluation was effective and provided useful information for future conference planning. Daltroy & Roccella (1988) report findings from an evaluation of three meetings of the Society for Public Health Education. They used a post-meeting questionnaire sent to all conference participants and a ten percent sample of members who did not attend the meetings three months after the conference. They used data collected to compare characteristics of

attenders and non-attenders, reasons for attending or not attending the meetings, preferences for future meetings (including topics, locations, dates, length of meeting, and suggestions for improvement based on meeting experiences), and extent to which attenders benefitted from the meetings. Kuh & Farrell (1981) report procedures and results for evaluation of ACPA '81, the annual meeting of the American College Personnel Association. Four data collection procedures were used: photography, interviews, a survey distributed at the keynote address session, and immediate personalized feedback to conference presenters. Their findings indicated that participants were very satisfied with the conference, had suggestions for improving the meeting, and expressed appreciation for being able to provide evaluation information.

Perhaps the most comprehensive evaluation of a conference, similar to the AM, was conducted in 1983 of Evaluation '83, the annual conference of the Evaluation Network (Covert & Stallman, 1984). A wide variety of data collection methods were used including surveys, interviews, observation, and photography to determine: demographic characteristics; participant personal goals for attending the meeting; assessment of effectiveness of session formats (including paper sessions, symposium or panel sessions, poster sessions, and roundtables); and planning procedures used for the meeting. Relative to sessions, the evaluation team studied no-shows of presenters and participants, availability of papers and handouts, quality of presentations, use of audiovisual aids, and role of the chairperson. The evaluation also looked at other aspects of the meeting including materials exchanges, job bank, exhibits, and social activities. The evaluation team was made up of

two evaluation professors, including this author, and 13 graduate students, from the University of Virginia.

One of the 1993 AM evaluation strands was referred to as a market survey, an approach designed to document how AM participants spent their time and how they felt about their participation in various activities. Findings of the market survey are reported here.

MARKET SURVEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The market survey was organized to answer five evaluation questions:

1. How do AM participants spend their time during a typical day?
2. Are there differences across the AM days relative to how time is spent?
3. Is years attending the AM, out of the past ten years, related to the way participants spend their time?
4. What is the general level of participant satisfaction with AM activities?
5. Does satisfaction vary across types of sessions or participant experience or types of sessions?

MARKET SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Participant Sampling and Recruitment

It was necessary to get a sample of AM participants to agree to participate in the market survey. It was desired that there be at least 50 participants for the Monday through Thursday days and at least 30 for Friday, a total of 230 participants. Based on likely

attrition at different points of the process, it was decided to initially ask about 700 persons to participate. In February, the AERA office randomly identified 600 registrants and sent three sets of mailing labels. In addition to these 600 registrants it was planned to ask about 100 participants on-site.

A letter was sent to the 600 registrants explaining the purpose of the survey, what they would be asked to do for a single day of attendance, and asking them to participate. If the individual was willing to participate this was indicated by return of a demographic information form. Of the 600, 298 returned the demographic form prior to the AM. Of these, only five declined participation for various reasons, mostly that their plans had changed and they would not be attending, they felt they would be too busy to participate, or they felt the AM would not be "typical" for them this year. Thus, 293 or 49% indicated they would be willing to participate. Participants were asked which days they would be in attendance at the meeting. This information was used to assign participants to days, balanced approximately evenly across the five days, with slightly fewer being assigned to Friday. Market survey days were assigned, but participants were told if they were not going to attend that day for a full day, they could select a different day and indicate the change on the market survey. The market survey was mailed about ten days prior to the AM.

In order to include some participants who may not have been in the population of pre-registrants, it was decided to ask some participants on-site to complete the market survey. Twenty-five were asked to participate on each of the days from Monday through Thursday and ten were asked to participate on Friday, selected at

random in the AM registration area or lobby. Thus, a total of 403 AM participants agreed to participate. Completed, usable market surveys as well demographic information forms, were received from 268 participants, a completion return rate of 67%. The balance across the days was above 50 for Monday through Thursday and above 30 for Friday, as desired. Considering the time covered by each participant, this amounted to more than 3400 participant hours of reporting.

Development of the Market Survey

Five primary decisions had to be made in development of the market survey:

1. What categories of activities would best describe the way AM participants spend their time?
2. What time frame would best fit the day in terms of start-time, end-time, and time period interval length?
3. What other information might be useful and how could it be obtained?
4. What would be the physical layout of the survey?
5. How would the survey be returned for processing?

A preliminary set of activity categories was determined and reviewed by Matt Miles, chair of the Standing Committee on the AM. After further review and discussion, a final set of activities, with their codes, was determined. Session related categories were: attendee; presenter; and chair, organizer, discussant, moderator, or officer. If one of the session codes was selected, the participant was asked to indicate the session number. Meal related activities were: alone, business, and social. Meeting related categories were:

AERA related, non-AERA related, social meeting, and informal discussion. Other categories were: seeking a new job such as using the placement service or interviewing for a job; time in the exhibition area; AERA-related work such as reading papers, setting up meetings; work not directly related to AERA; rest or relaxation; "out on the town" including activities such as a city tour, shopping, going to a museum; physical exercise; socializing with others; and personal time. Two or three alphabetical character codes were generated for each of the activities.

A review of the AM program indicated that some sessions start as early as 7:00 a.m. and some go as late as 8:30 p.m., with a wide variety of session starting times. While it was impossible to find time periods which would fit all session times, it was determined that starting times at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour and time periods of half-hour provided the best fit to session times. Thus, for each day the starting time was 7:15 a.m. and the ending time was 8:45 p.m., except for an ending time of 4:45 p.m. for Friday. On the days of Monday through Thursday, 13.5 hours were covered by 27 half-hour periods and on Friday 9.5 hours were covered by 19 half-hour periods.

Since each participant was being asked to indicate how they spent each half-hour, it was decided that it would be very valuable to collect general satisfaction perceptions of the time spent. So, in addition to the logging of the activity, the participant was asked to provide a general satisfaction on a -2 (dissatisfied) to +2 (very satisfied) scale. Since participants were asked to indicate session numbers, it is possible to determine and compare average satisfaction ratings across types of sessions, including

experimental sessions.

A lot of information needed to be collected in as user friendly and efficient manner as possible. The market survey was a fold-over of about 5.5 by 8.5 inches, a size easily carried in the AERA Program. There was a fold-over flap which could be viewed at anytime for a description of the codes and other information needs. For each half-hour, the participant was asked to circle the closest descriptor code, indicate session number if appropriate, circle the satisfaction rating, and make comments in a space provided for each half-hour. In addition, there were three open-ended questions: (1) What, if anything, stands out as being very satisfying about your day at the AERA Annual Meeting?; (2) What, if anything, stands out as being disappointing about your day at the AERA Annual Meeting?; and (3) What suggestions do you have for improving the AERA Annual Meeting?

There were four ways of returning the completed market survey. Participants could deposit the market survey in a collection box at the AERA registration area, give it to a market survey collector stationed close to the main entry doors of the two primary conference hotels on Monday through Thursday evenings, drop it off at the hotel front desk, or mail it to the market survey coordinator in a business reply envelope.

RESULTS

Only four surveys were returned which were not usable because of failure to follow instructions or with comments relating to inability to use the survey. It is clear that those who participated took the task seriously. Many comments were made to

elaborate on codes circled and many responded to the three open-ended items. There were several instances of participants indicating appreciation for being involved in the market survey.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Market survey respondents represented a wide variety of AM participants. Relative to membership in AERA, 28% had been members for three years or less, 40% for four to 11 years, and 29% for 12 or more years. When asked how many annual meetings they had attended in the past ten years, 38% had attended less than three times, 30% had attended three to six times, and 32% had attended more than six times. Thirteen percent indicated they had attended all of the past ten annual meetings. Fifty-six percent of the respondents were on the AM program making presentations, 12% were on the program as session chairs or organizers, nine percent were on as critics or discussants, and seven percent were on as an officer. Thirty-three percent indicated they were not on the AM program.

A large majority (74%) of participants were from higher education settings. About 20% of these were graduate students. Other settings represented were: R&D Lab/Center (11%); K-12 education (11%); medical (6%); business (6%), mostly testing companies; consulting firms (5%); and professional associations (3%). Multiple responses to this item were possible, so percentages add up to more than 100%. Eleven percent of the respondents indicated they would be seeking employment at the AM. When asked about what percentage of their expenses were being paid by their employer, there was a U-shaped distribution. Twenty-nine percent indicated 0 to 25%, eight percent indicated 26 to 50%, eight percent

indicated 51 to 75%, and 51% indicated 76 to 100% of their expenses were paid by their employer.

Forty-one percent indicated they planned to arrive before Monday, 38% indicated they planned to arrive on Monday, and 18% planned on arriving after Monday. Relative to the days participants would be in attendance, 68% would attend on Monday, 85% would attend on Tuesday, 93% would attend on Wednesday, 85% would attend on Thursday, and 54% would attend on Friday. Thirty-five percent indicated they would attend all five days, 28% indicated they would attend four days, 27% indicated they would attend three days, seven percent indicated they would attend two days, and three percent indicated they would attend only one day. Ninety percent of the respondents indicated they would be staying in one of the conference listed hotels.

Sixty-five percent of the participants were female and 35% were male. A large majority (88%) were Caucasian Americans, four percent were Asian Americans, three percent were African Americans, two percent were Hispanic/Latin Americans, and four percent were other, mostly international. Thirteen percent were less than 35 years old, 59% were between 35 and 49 years old, and 27% were 50 years or older. While it is not possible to demonstrate that the market survey sample is truly representative of the total AM participant group, it is at least clear that there was a wide variety of types of participants represented in the market survey group. Comparing these figures with the demographic characteristics of AERA membership, as presented in the Educational Researcher (August-September, 1993), many of the percentages relative to primary affiliation and ethnic background are very close. There was a

higher percentage of female market survey respondents (64.5%) than in the membership (51%).

How Participants Spent Their Time

Table 1 provides a summary of percentage time and hours spent within the four categories of activities and level of satisfaction for the total group of respondents. Most time was spent (37% or an average of 4.8 hours per day) in session related activities, 15% (about two hours per day) was spent in having meals, eight percent (about one hour per day) was spent in meetings other than scheduled sessions, and 35% (about 4.6 hours per day), was spent in other activities.

Within the session related activities, an average of about 4.22 hours were spent per day attending sessions and about 0.61 hours spent presenting or being involved in other session related activities. About two hours (1.96) per day were spent in meal related activities, more than half of which (1.12 hours) was spent in social meals. About one hour (1.03) per day was spent in meetings other than sessions and about 4.61 hours per day were spent in other activities. Most of the other activity time (about 1.67 hours) was coded as personal time. The distribution of times spent in other activities ranged from being relatively low for job seeking (0.13 hours) and exercising (0.16 hours), and relatively higher for AERA work (0.46 hours), "on the town" (0.48), and rest/relaxation (0.64 hours).

Level of Participant Satisfaction Across Activities

For each half-hour where the respondent indicated how they

Table 1

Percent of Time and Hours Spent and General Satisfaction by Annual Meeting Activity

Activity category	Activity	Time spent M	SD	Hrs.	Satisfaction n	M	SD
Session related	Attendee	32.32	20.86	4.22	223	1.16	0.66
	Presenter	3.35	6.89	0.43	59	1.36	0.77
	Other roles	1.40	4.68	0.18	22	1.53	0.64
	Total session	37.07	19.41	4.83	242	1.22	0.60
Meals	Alone	3.17	4.49	0.42	87	0.70	0.79
	Business	3.22	7.03	0.42	49	1.63	0.54
	Social	8.50	8.74	1.12	134	1.59	0.61
	Total meals	14.89	9.95	1.96	202	1.32	0.71
Meeting related	AERA mtg.	1.38	5.99	0.18	17	1.06	0.98
	Non-AERA mtg.	1.87	7.28	0.24	25	1.55	0.76
	Social	3.10	6.28	0.40	64	1.57	0.67
	Informal disc.	1.60	3.42	0.21	44	1.46	0.58
	Total meeting	7.94	12.37	1.03	110	1.50	0.64
	Job seeking	0.98	4.24	0.13	15	0.65	0.89
	Exhibits*	2.49	4.59	0.32	65	1.14	0.72
	AERA work	3.52	7.94	0.46	62	0.59	0.96

Table 1, continued

Percent of Time and Hours Spent and General Satisfaction by Annual Meeting Activity

Activity category	Activity	Time spent M	SD	Hrs.	Satisfaction n	M	SD
	Non-AERA work	2.83	7.76	0.37	41	1.01	0.75
Other	Rest/relax.	4.88	7.98	0.64	83	1.25	0.87
	On the town	3.71	10.30	0.48	41	1.47	0.71
	Exercise	1.20	2.87	0.16	35	1.21	0.92
	Socializing	2.96	5.54	0.39	64	1.37	0.64
	Personal time	12.83	11.51	1.67	148	0.92	0.88
	Total other	35.39	18.86	4.61	217	1.11	0.69
Total all activities		95.29	12.83	12.43	261	1.25	0.50

* Only on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

spent their time, they were asked to rate their general level of satisfaction on a five-point scale from -2 to +2. General satisfaction across all categories and respondents was +1.25, a reasonably high level of satisfaction. As indicated in Table 1, the highest rated activity category was meeting related activities (+1.50), followed by meal related activities (+1.32), session related activities (+1.22), and other activities (+1.11).

Overall, there were high levels of satisfaction for session related activities (+1.22). Session attendee participation was rated at +1.16, session presenting was rated at +1.36, and other session activities were rated at +1.53. Overall satisfaction for meal related activities was +1.32. The satisfaction rating was very high for business-oriented (+1.63) and social-oriented (+1.59) meals, but much lower (+0.70) for meals alone. Meetings were rated with high satisfaction (+1.50), with non-AERA (+1.55) meetings, social (+1.57) meetings, and informal discussions (+1.46) being higher than satisfaction with AERA-related business (+1.06) meetings. Relative to satisfaction ratings for the other activities, "on the town" was rated highest (+1.47), followed closely by socializing (+1.37). Rest and relaxation (+1.25), physical exercise (+1.21), and visiting the exhibits (+1.14) were rated as generally satisfying. Non-AERA work was rated at +1.01 and personal time was rated at +0.92. The two lowest rated activities were job seeking (+0.65) and AERA-related work (+0.59). Comments were made indicating some dissatisfaction with the job placement service and dissatisfaction related to AERA-related work may have been related to several comments made about finding session rooms and, to a lessor extent, problems in getting registered. It is

clear that there were generally high levels of satisfaction with most of the activities.

Table 2 presents results of satisfaction ratings for attending different types of sessions. Each entry represents a rating of a half-hour of attending a session. The overall session rating was +1.20. Comparing the three major types of sessions, the rating given to policy-related sessions was +1.29 and for experimental sessions it was +1.25. Theme-related sessions were rated lower at +1.11. Comparing session formats, discussion (+1.40) and business/membership (+1.33) sessions had the highest ratings. The session formats of invited address (+1.20), poster (+1.20), symposium (+1.15), and paper presentation (+1.11) were rated at about the same level. The lowest rated, relative to satisfaction, was roundtable sessions at +0.91.

Time Spent Across AM Days

There were variations, as presented in Table 3, in time spent in various activities across the days. It should be pointed out that Monday and Friday are different than the other days. Since there were a few organized activities on Monday morning, 13.5 hours were coded although it should be recognized that Monday organized opportunities were lower, thus the Monday figures for organized activities would be lower and for other activities should be higher. Friday was coded from 7:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., 9.5 hours rather than 13.5 hours. Friday percentages are based on percent of 9.5 hours rather than 13.5 hours.

Session activities were highest on Tuesday (48.6%, 6.6 hours), second on Thursday (39.9%, 5.4 hours), followed by Monday (31.6%, 4.3 hours), Wednesday (29.9%, 4.0 hours), and lowest on Friday (3.1

Table 2

Satisfaction Ratings by Type of Sessions, Attendee Ratings per Half-Hour of Activity

Session Type	*n*	*M*	*SD*
All Sessions	1865	+1.20	0.96
Experimental	622	+1.25	0.99
Policy-Related	251	+1.29	0.93
Theme-Related	145	+1.11	0.92
Paper Session	347	+1.11	0.97
Symposium	651	+1.15	0.99
Discussion	220	+1.40	0.86
Invited Address	157	+1.20	0.91
Membership/Business	97	+1.33	0.94
Roundtable	85	+0.91	1.06
Poster	88	+1.20	0.82

Table 3

Summary of Primary Total Day Activity Categories by Market Survey Day, Percent of Time and Time in Hours

		Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.*	Avg.
	n	55	62	59	57	35	268
Session	%	31.6	48.6	29.9	39.9	32.8	37.07
	Hrs.	4.3	6.6	4.0	5.4	3.1	4.83
Meal	%	14.6	14.1	17.9	15.6	10.5	14.89
	Hrs.	2.0	1.9	2.4	2.1	1.0	1.96
Meeting	%	5.6	6.1	12.7	7.7	7.2	7.94
	Hrs.	0.8	0.8	1.7	1.0	0.7	1.03
Other	%	44.7	28.8	39.1	32.0	31.7	35.38
	Hrs.	6.0	3.9	5.3	4.3	3.0	4.61
%	Reported	96.6	97.6	99.5	95.2	82.2	95.29
Hrs.	Reported	13.0	13.2	13.4	12.9	7.8	12.43
%	Unknown	3.4	2.4	0.5	4.8	17.3	4.71

*Based on 9.5 hours logged rather than 13.5 hours.

hours). Time spent on meal related activities was highest on Wednesday (17.9%, 2.4 hours), about the same on Monday (14.6%, 2.0 hours), Tuesday (14.1%, 1.9 hours), and Thursday (15.6%, 2.1 hours), and lowest for Friday (1.0 hour). Meeting activities, other than sessions, were highest for Wednesday (12.7%, 1.7 hours) and ranged from 0.7 hours to 1.0 hours for the other four days. Other activities were highest for Monday (44.7%, 6.0 hours), followed by Wednesday (39.1%, 5.3 hours), Thursday (32.0%, 4.3 hours), Tuesday (28.8%, 3.9 hours), and Friday (3.0 hours).

Table 4 presents results of percentage time and hours spent in major categories in the mornings of attendance, covering 7:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Forty percent of the time (2.0 hours) was spent in session related activities, 12.7% (0.6 hours) spent in meal related activities, 4.8% (0.2 hours) spent in meeting related activities, and 40.2% (2.0 hours) were spent in other activities. Since there were few organized activities for Monday morning, it is not comparable with the other four days. Clearly, Tuesday morning had the highest time spent in session related activities (54.5%, 2.7 hours), followed by Thursday (44.4%, 2.2 hours), Wednesday (41.2%, 2.1 hours), Friday (39.1%, 2.0 hours), and Monday (18.7%, 0.9 hours).

Table 5 presents results of percentage time and hours spent in major categories in the afternoons of attendance, covering 12:15 to 5:15 p.m. Forty-three percent of the time (2.2 hours) was spent in session related activities, 11.9% (0.6 hours) spent in meal related activities, 7.9% (0.4 hours) spent in meeting related activities, and 30.1% (1.5 hours) were spent in other activities Clearly, Tuesday afternoon had the highest time spent in session related

Table 4

Summary of Primary Morning Activity Categories by Market Survey Day (7:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.), Percent of Time and Time in Hours

		Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Avg.
	n	55	62	59	57	35	268
Session	%	18.7	54.5	41.2	44.4	39.1	40.07
	Hrs.	0.9	2.7	2.1	2.2	2.0	2.00
Meal	%	12.4	11.6	15.6	12.3	11.1	12.72
	Hrs.	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.64
Meeting	%	4.9	3.1	4.9	4.9	7.1	4.78
	Hrs.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.24
Other	%	58.7	29.7	37.8	37.5	37.7	40.15
	Hrs.	2.9	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.01
%	Reported	94.7	98.9	99.5	99.1	95.1	97.72
Hrs.	Reported	4.7	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.89
%	Unknown	5.3	1.1	0.5	0.9	4.9	2.28

Table 5

Summary of Primary Afternoon Activity Categories by Market Survey Day (12:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.), Percent of Time and Time in Hours

		Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Avg.
	n	55	62	59	57	35	268
Session	%	49.5	54.4	32.0	48.4	23.1	43.10
	Hrs.	2.5	2.7	1.6	2.4	1.0	2.15
Meal	%	9.3	11.6	15.4	12.8	8.9	11.87
	Hrs.	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.59
Meeting	%	7.1	6.0	10.7	8.8	6.6	7.91
	Hrs.	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.40
Other	%	31.6	25.5	41.9	26.0	22.6	30.07
	Hrs.	1.6	1.3	2.1	1.3	1.0	1.50
%	Reported	97.5	97.4	100.0	96.0	61.1	92.95
Hrs.	Reported	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.8	2.8	4.65
%	Unknown	2.5	2.6	0.0	4.0	38.9	7.05

activities (54.4%, 2.7 hours), followed by Monday (49.5%, 2.5 hours) and Thursday 8 (48.4%, 2.4 hours), Wednesday (32.0%, 1 6 hours), and Friday (23.1%, 1.0 hours).

Table 6 presents results of percentage time and hours spent in major categories in the evenings of attendance, covering 5:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. In this time period, 22.3% of the time (0.8 hours) was spent in session related activities, 23.9% (0.8 hours) spent in meal related activities, 13.2% (0.5 hours) spent in meeting related activities, and 36.3% (1.3 hours) were spent in other activities. Clearly, Tuesday evening had the highest time spent in session related activities (32.0%, 1.1 hours), followed by Monday (24.7%, 0.9 hours) and Thursday (21.3%, 0.7 hours). Wednesday (10.7%, 0.4 hours) had the lowest percentage of evening time spent in session related activities. About a fourth of the evening time was spent in meal related activities across all four days, Monday through Thursday.

Table 7 presents the percentage of time and hours spent attending sessions from Monday a.m. through Friday p.m., excluding the evening hours. Clearly, the percentage attendance at sessions is highest for Monday p.m. (44.4% or 2.2 hours) and all day Tuesday (45.5% or 2.3 hours for a.m. and 47.7% or 2.4 hours for p.m.). It falls off for Wednesday (34.2% or 1.7 hours for a.m. and 26.4% or 1.3 hours for p.m.), is back up somewhat on Thursday (40.9% or 2.0 hours for a.m. and 42.6% or 2.1 hours for p.m.), and drops off again on Friday (32.0% or 1.6 hours for a.m. and 19.4% or 1.0 hour for p.m.).

Table 6

Summary of Primary Evening Activity Categories by Market Survey Day (5:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.), Percent of Time and Time in Hours

		Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Avg.
	n	55	62	59	57	233
Session	%	24.7	32.0	10.7	21.3	22.26
	Hrs.	0.9	1.1	0.4	0.7	0.78
Meal	%	25.5	21.4	24.7	24.3	23.92
	Hrs.	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.83
Meeting	%	4.4	10.6	26.9	10.3	13.19
	Hrs.	0.2	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.46
Other	%	43.7	32.3	37.1	32.8	36.31
	Hrs.	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.27
%	Reported	98.2	96.4	99.3	88.8	95.69
Hrs.	Reported	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.1	3.35
%	Unknown	1.8	3.6	0.7	11.2	4.31

Table 7

Percentage and Time Spent Attending Sessions by Primary Session Time Periods

Time period	n	Percent time	Time in hours
Monday AM	55	18.36	0.92
Monday PM	55	44.36	2.22
Tuesday AM	62	45.48	2.27
Tuesday PM	62	47.74	2.39
Wednesday AM	59	34.24	1.71
Wednesday PM	59	26.44	1.32
Thursday AM	57	40.88	2.04
Thursday PM	57	42.63	2.13
Friday AM	35	32.00	1.60
Friday PM	35	19.43	0.97

Time Spent and Satisfaction by AERA Annual Meeting Experience

There are a great many comparisons which could be made across different respondent subgroups. Only one will be reported here, that of comparing time spent in various activities between AM experience groups: less than three years, three to six years, and more than six years attendance out of the past ten years.

Table 8 presents the results by AM years experience groups. As years experience category increases, percentage of time in session related activities decreased (41.0%, 35.0% and 34.3%) and percentage of time in meetings increased (5.4%, 8.2%, and 10.7%). The amount of time spent in meals increased slightly (13.5%, 15.5%, and 16.0%) and time spent in other activities ranged from 34.4% to 36.7%. As Table 9 indicates, as experience category increases, time spent attending sessions decreased and time spent in other session related activities increased. As indicated in Table 10, more experienced (more than six years) AM participants had higher satisfaction ratings (+1.37) than less experienced (six years or less) AM participants (+1.20).

Summary of Open-Ended Items

Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on the least and most satisfying aspects of the AM. The most frequent comments made related to least satisfying were: lack of quality of sessions or presentations (n=36), lack of maps or directions to session rooms (n=23), conflicts related to multiple sessions of interest scheduled at the same time (n=16), lack of copies of papers in some sessions (n=10), and no-show presenters (n=3). Most satisfying aspects were: networking or socializing (n=81), quality of sessions or

Table 8

Summary of Primary Total Day Activity Categories by Years Attending Annual Meeting out of Past Ten Years, Percent of Time and Time in Hours

		Less than 3 years	3 to 6 years	7 to 10 years	Avg.
	n	102	80	86	268
Session	%	41.0	35.0	34.3	37.07
	Hrs.	5.4	4.5	4.4	4.83
Meal	%	13.5	15.5	16.0	14.89
	Hrs.	1.8	2.0	2.1	1.96
Meeting	%	5.4	8.2	10.7	7.94
	Hrs.	0.7	1.1	1.4	1.03
Other	%	35.2	36.7	34.4	35.39
	Hrs.	4.7	4.7	4.4	4.61
%	Reported	95.1	95.3	95.5	95.29
Hrs.	Reported	12.6	12.4	12.3	12.43
%	Unknown	4.9	4.7	4.5	4.71

Table 9

Session Related Activities by Years Attending Annual Meeting out of Past Ten Years, Percent of Time Spent in Activity

		Less than 3 years	3 to 6 years	7 to 10 years	Avg.
	n	102	80	86	268
Session	%	37.8	30.3	27.7	32.32
Attendee	Hrs.	5.0	3.9	3.5	4.22
Session	%	3.0	2.9	4.2	3.35
Presenter	Hrs.	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.43
Session	%	0.1	1.8	2.5	1.40
Chair, etc.	Hrs.	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.18
Total	%	41.0	35.0	34.3	37.07
	Hrs.	5.44	4.53	4.39	4.83

Table 10

Overall General Satisfaction Rating by Years Attending Annual Meeting out of Past Ten Years

	Less than 3 Years	3 to 6 Years	7 to 10 years	Avg.
n	100	76	85	261
M	+1.21	+1.18	+1.37	+1.25
SD	0.51	0.51	0.45	0.50

presentations (n=66), experimental or interactive sessions (n=16), and variety of offerings (n=6). Suggestions for improving the AM, made most frequently were: to provide maps to hotels and meeting rooms (n=31); provide more experimental or interactive sessions (n=20); provide fewer, but higher quality sessions (n=10); avoid scheduling conflicts (n=7); and provide orientation and mentoring for "rookies" (n=5).

CONCLUSION

The market survey provides a description of the manner in which participants spend their time at the AM and relative satisfaction with various activities. Clearly, the typical AM participant spends more than half of the time from 7:15 a.m. to 8:45 p.m. involved in sessions or having meals, with the remainder of the time spent in a wide variety of other activities, many of which involve interaction with other AM participants. General satisfaction was high for most of the AM activities. Experimental sessions and policy-related sessions were rated as being more satisfying than those which were not of these types. Participants also indicated higher satisfaction with discussion and membership/ business meetings. This view of the AM is very positive, participants spend most of their time in AM oriented activities and they have relatively high levels of satisfaction with their participation.

REFERENCES

Ayers, J. (1989). Evaluating workshops and institutes. (Report No. EDO-TM-89-11). Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 315 427)

Covert, R. W. & Stahlman, J. I. (1984). Evaluation '83: Reinventing the wheel: An evaluation of an evaluation conference. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Evaluation Research Center.

Daltroy, L. H. & Roccella, E. (1988). Evaluation of continuing education in health education: The Society for Public Health Education's 1983, 1984 and 1985 mid-year scientific symposia. Health Education Quarterly, 15(2), 139-150.

Halverson, B. & Thiesse, J. (1979). Practical evaluation and the regional conference approach. Lifelong Learning: The Adult Years, 3(3), 4-6.

Kuh, G. D. & Farrell, P. J. (1981). Evaluation of ACPA '81. Washington, DC: American College Personnel Association. (ERIC Documentation Reproduction Service No. ED 209 340)

Miles, M. (1993). Seven ways of looking at an annual meeting. Educational Researcher, 22(2), 38.

Russell, W. J. (1993). Report to the membership. Educational Researcher, 22(6), 33-34.